



## Co-option Policy

This procedure is based on NALC Legal Briefing L15-08 – Good practice for selection of candidates for co-option to Local Councils.

Parish and Town Councils are permitted to exercise the power to co-opt a person onto the Council to fill an ordinary or casual vacancy. Charlbury Town Council invites applications from candidates who satisfy (i) the eligibility criteria for being a councillor and (ii) the competencies listed in a person specification, agreed by the council (see Appendix A).

Whenever the need for co-option arises, Charlbury Town Council will advertise the vacancy to seek and encourage 'expressions of interest' by a specified date from anyone who is eligible to stand as a Town Councillor.

All potential candidates will be asked to put their request for consideration in writing, using the person specification for co-option as their guide, see Appendix A.

This includes:

- i. Eligibility to stand as a councillor (a person is eligible to be co-opted provided the person is qualified to be a councillor pursuant to s. 79 of the 1972 Act and is not disqualified pursuant to s.80 of the 1972 Act.)
- ii. Reason for wishing to be a councillor
- iii. Previous community/council work
- iv. Other skills they can bring to the council

Please note it is a condition of a Councillor that a means of contact by telephone and/or e-mail will be public information.

After receipt of a candidate's written self-certification which confirms the applicant meets the statutory requirements to be a member of a local council, the council will need to fairly consider if candidates are suitable for co-option. Candidates may be assessed by whether or not they meet the criteria in a person specification, agreed by the council. The person specification is in the Appendix to this policy.

At the next Full Council Meeting:

- a) Clerk to confirm that each candidate is qualified to become a Councillor and is not disqualified from being a Councillor as set out in the Local Government Act 1972 s79 and s80
- b) Chair of the Council offers opportunity for debate on the order of priority to offer co-option (if more than one candidate).
- c) Vote on the acceptability of each candidate for co-option, utilising the 'person specification' criteria set out below and any personal statements requested from and provided by the candidates. An absolute majority is required for each candidate from all members present and entitled to vote (LGA 1972 Sch.12 Para.39).



d) Vote to select the order in which acceptable candidates (decided by the vote in c) above) should be approached to offer co-option on this occasion.

e) Vote on candidate(s) to offer the role of councillor

f) The Clerk to approach and offer co-option to candidate(s) after the meeting in the order of priority determined by the vote at c above. If the first choice does not accept the post, then the second is to be approached and so on until the ranking list is exhausted.

OR

f) The Chair to offer the successful candidate(s) the position immediately after voting.

g) Assuming that the co-option position is filled, formally ratify the appointment at the next Full Council meeting.

OR

g) Assuming that the co-option position is accepted, the Council to formally ratify the appointment and the Declaration of Acceptance of Office to be completed.

h) The Clerk to notify the Electoral Services of the new Councillor appointment, (OR initiate 'Acceptance of Office' paperwork and 'Registration of Interests' on the appropriate website.

i) If no one accepts the vacant post(s), the whole process is to be repeated when new individuals expressing interest are identified or until the next election.

## Appendix A

Charlbury Town Council

Description of Office (may include particular committee membership or other responsibilities):

Town Councillor

COMPETENCY	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Relevant knowledge, education, professional qualifications & training	Sound knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community.	A levels Degree Vocational training or professional qualification (e.g. accountant, teacher, survey)
Experience, Skills, Knowledge and Ability	Ability to listen constructively A good team player Ability to pick up and run with a variety of projects Solid interest in local matters Ability and willingness to represent the Council and their community Good interpersonal skills and able to contribute opinions at meetings whilst	Knowledge of HR, procurement, contract management, financial control or risk management and compliance, public relations Experience of working in another public body or not for profit organisation Experience of working with voluntary and or local community/ interest groups.



	<p>willing to see others' views and accept majority decisions</p> <p>Ability to communicate succinctly and clearly</p> <p>Ability and willingness to work closely with other members and to maintain good working relationships with all members and staff</p> <p>Ability and willingness to work with the Council's partners (eg voluntary groups, other parish councils, principal authority, charities, etc)</p> <p>Ability and willingness to undertake induction training and other relevant training</p> <p>Good reading and analytic skills</p>	<p>Basic knowledge of legal issues relating to town and parish councils or local authorities.</p> <p>Experience of delivering presentations.</p> <p>Experience of working with the media.</p> <p>Experience in financial control/budgeting</p> <p>Experience of staff management</p>
<p>Other requirements</p>	<p>Ability and willingness to attend meetings of the council (or the meetings of other local authorities and local bodies) in the evening and events in the evening and at weekends.</p> <p>Flexible</p> <p>Enthusiastic</p>	

Adopted 24/4/2024